

March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:

My name is Melissa Becce and I am a resident of West Hartford and a program evaluator.

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- [H.B. No. 5417](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- [S.B. No. 386](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.
- [S.B. No. 16](#) AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

I am testifying in opposition to the bills I listed above because they are rooted in false claims, unsupported by data, that Connecticut is experiencing tremendously high rates of crime being committed by youth. This crime rhetoric is being used to cause fear and push for reforms that, in the end, will result in more Black and Brown youth and low-income White youth becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. This will not provide a solution for any issues related to crime in our state.

This issue is important to me because 4 years ago our own motor vehicle was stolen out of our driveway in West Hartford. It was recovered 3 weeks later, but we had plenty of time to consider how our own oversight may have contributed to the issue, and to recognize that this incident, especially if committed by a juvenile, was not worth extensive prosecution and should certainly not be punished with imprisonment. Motor vehicles are not worth a person's life or livelihood, and the acts proposed above will do nothing to prevent or better the situation.

I urge you to SUPPORT [S.B. No. 392](#) and [S.B. No. 387](#) with the recommendations submitted by the [Connecticut Justice Alliance](#). Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today and feel free to reach out if you have any further questions.

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